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Letter dated 11 February 1994 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations

I have the honour to transmit herewith the memorandum of today's date of the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia concerning the incidents on the Yugoslav-Albanian border.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under the agenda item entitled "Maintenance of international security", and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dragomir DJOKIC
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Annex

Memorandum dated 11 February 1994 by the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia concerning incidents on the Yugoslav-Albanian border

The Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is compelled to bring once again, with great concern, to the attention of the United Nations Security Council, Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) participating States and the entire world public the latest dangerous escalation of border incidents and provocations by the Albanian side at the Yugoslav-Albanian border, which constitute gross violations of the territorial integrity of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

In the month of January 1994 alone, the Albanian side provoked nine border incidents in which the State border of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was violated and all of them took place on Yugoslav territory. Two Albanian nationals lost their lives in these incidents, for which the sole responsibility rests on the Albanian side, two Albanian nationals were wounded, whereas 21 Albanian nationals were apprehended while illegally crossing the border and then returned to the relevant Albanian authorities.

According to the official data of the competent Yugoslav authorities, there were 51 border incidents during 1993, 46 from the Albanian side and 5 from the Yugoslav side. In 16 cases fire was opened at Yugoslav border guards by Albanian soldiers and armed civilians. During the intervention of Yugoslav border guards, acting in all cases in full compliance with relevant legal provisions, 12 Albanian nationals lost their lives and 9 were wounded, one Yugoslav border guard was killed by the Albanians, and Yugoslav border guards seized large quantities of arms and ammunition from Albanian nationals. During 1993 there were 524 illegal attempts to cross the border from Albania to Yugoslavia. Since 1991 the Albanian side has encouraged mass defections to Yugoslavia and the forcible destruction, damage and removal of border signs deeper into Yugoslav territory in which, in addition to Albanian citizens, the official authorities of Albania also took part. Hundreds of border signs have been destroyed or damaged.

The intensive escalation in the number of border incidents at the Yugoslav-Albanian border, caused by armed attacks against Yugoslav border guards and the violations of the State territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia occurred after the forcible secessionist break-up of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The Republic of Albania wishes to use the tragic developments in the former Yugoslavia and especially the civil war in the former Bosnia and Herzegovina for the purpose of escalating and deepening the destabilization and conflicts in the Balkans, in which it perceives an opportunity to create a greater Albania. To that end, the Republic of Albania openly interferes in the internal affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, inciting the secessionist forces in the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija to terrorism and the boycott and overthrow of the constitutional order. This was manifested especially in the

official recognition of the so-called "Republic of Kosova" by the Republic of Albania.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia wishes to point out that such a policy of Albania constitutes a source of danger for peace and security in the Balkan region and is in collision with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter of CSCE regarding respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of States.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia advised the United Nations Security Council of the problem in August 1993 (S/26346) and informed the world public thereof. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia proposed to Albania a meeting of their respective Ministers of the Interior and initiated again a meeting of the main Joint Commission on Border Incidents in accordance with the bilateral agreement on measures for preventing and solving border incidents. After a two-year interval, the 24th meeting of the main Joint Commission on Border Incidents was held in Tirana in October 1993, when the Albanian side committed itself to control the border more efficiently and to prevent illegal crossings by their naticnals to the Yugoslav territory.

Unfortunately, despite the agreements and declarative readiness, Albania provoked new incidents in 1994, of which the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia informed the public and the United Nations Security Council (S/1994/17 and S/1994/46). It is to be noted that not only does the Albanian side not show readiness to prevent border incidents and take preventive measures, but it further instigates incidents, deliberately endangering in that way the lives of its own citizens. This scenario of Albania is aimed at demonizing the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Serbs and offers to the world wrong pictures about the suffering of its citizens, for which it is the only one to blame. Even before the factual state of affairs is established by local joint commissions, Albania uses border incidents to accuse the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and conduct an anti-Yugoslav campaign in the world public and international forums, including the United Nations.

All this points to the continuity of the Albanian policy, the aim of which is to bring into question the very existence of the inter-State border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Provocation of border incidents and the encouragement of illegal crossings to the State territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are intended to create instability in the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija and permanent tension at the Yugoslav-Albanian border. By inventing an alleged threat from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and by creating an atmosphere of permanent tension in mutual relations, Albania seeks to ensure foreign political and military support and assistance to achieve its territorial aspirations towards the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia expresses its ever greater concern that such a policy of Albania is accompanied by its accelerated armament, entering military alliances with other States and military organizations, increasing foreign presence in Albania and the use of the Albanian territory by some foreign States for activities directed against the security of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The Republic of Albania openly supports the separatist movement in Kosovo and Metohija, and incites the Albanian national minority in Yugoslavia to boycott the constitutional and State order and democratic institutions such as elections and Parliament, as well as educational institutions, offering young Albanians ignorance and ghettoization, instead of modern education and cultural progress in accordance with European standards.

In its anti-Yugoslav policy, Albania is encouraged by the support of some outside, non-regional factors which, in the pursuit of their unrealistic ambitions or global interests, foment the territorial aspirations of Albania towards the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and push it towards exacerbating its relations with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. In this context Albania calls for the strengthening of foreign military presence in the Balkans, working on its destabilization and the creation of a new hotbed of crisis. Stepping up border incidents in the context of such a policy may be a dangerous spark with grave consequences.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia reiterates that the status of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija, which is an integral part of Yugoslavia and Serbia, as well as the status of the Albanian national minority, cannot be, under any condition, a pretext for exercising pressure against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, least of all for territorial claims and the provocation of a new hotbed of crisis. The Albanian national minority in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has all ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic rights guaranteed by the constitution and laws in accordance with the highest international standards.

In pursuing a peaceful and constructive foreign policy in the Balkans and Europe, the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia attaches great importance to the development of relations and cooperation with its neighbours and to the establishment of normal relations with the Republic of Albania. In doing so, it proceeds from the generally accepted principles of international law and the basic documents of the United Nations and CSCE and considers that national minorities - the Albanian minority in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Serb and Montenegrin national minorities in Albania - should be factors for strengthening bonds and cooperation.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia reaffirms its commitment to the principle of good-neighbourliness, open borders and a free flow of people to which it has made a great contribution in its practice with other neighbours. Yugoslavia expressed readiness to open new border crossings with Albania in order to facilitate communications, but it encountered rejection on the Albanian side. Faced with the latest increase in the number of border incidents at the Yugoslav-Albanian border, the Yugoslav side officially proposed to the Albanian side at the beginning of February 1994 that an extraordinary meeting of the main Joint Yugoslav-Albanian Commission on Border Incidents be held with the aim of establishing measures for preventing border incidents.

Committed to the Charter of the United Nations and CSCE documents, the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia calls for a comprehensive dialogue with Albania on all outstanding issues, convinced that it is in the

interest of the peoples of the two neighbouring countries and peace and stability in the Balkans and Europe.

At the same time, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia expresses its firm resolve to protect its borders, territorial integrity and sovereignty and the constitutional order established by the democratic will of the people.